

LONG ISLAND FORUM



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 FORUM**

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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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Cannonball Express

I wonder how many Forum
 readers remember when the Can-
 nonball Express was put on by the
 LIRR in 1895 and its engineer
 James Eichorn who served for 42
 years.

Then there was the Greenport-
 Amagansett train, called the Cape
 Horn, which consisted of a loco-
 motive and only two cars. It ran
 on weekdays only, leaving Ama-
 gansett in the early morning and
 Greenport in the late afternoon.

About 1903 or a little later the
 railroad also put on its camelback
 locomotives with separate cabs for
 the engineer and the fireman.
 Their wheels had a tendency to
 spin and it took them quite a
 while to get moving. I believe they
 were not a success and were fin-
 ally abandoned.

I think the fastest of all trains
 on this railroad was the Sunrise
 Special which ran between Mon-
 tauk and New York City for sev-
 eral years during the Fisher de-
 velopment at Montauk.

Harry B. Squires
 Bridgehamton

Calhoun's Statue

In Harper's monthly for Decem-
 ber 1850, which was over 100 years
 ago, appeared the item that "The
 statue of John C. Calhoun made
 by Powers (Hiram) for the city of
 Charleston and which was lost by
 shipwreck off Fire Island has been
 recovered and forwarded to its
 destination. The left arm was bro-
 ken off at the elbow. With this
 exception it was uninjured."

Perhaps some reader will know
 the particulars and write the
 Forum about it so you can authen-
 ticate this old report.

Georgina J. Torrey
 Long Beach

Wisteria Hall

Could somebody verify the re-
 port that there is or was a place
 called Wisteria Hall somewhere on
 Long Island? I once read about it
 and cannot recall the source. Was
 it in a novel?

(Mrs.) Maude B. Allen
 East Meadow

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Romance and Marriage of 1722

MISS Marguerite V. Doggett, Librarian of the Long Island Collection in the Queens Borough Public Library in Jamaica, recently granted me the privilege of turning the pages of one of the smallest and rarest autobiographies I ever saw.

Its crinkled yellow cover measures approximately 2 x 2¾ inches; there are 35 pages; and it is thought to be the sole copy.

From the flyleaf I learned that the book contains "The Matrimonial Life of Edward Willett With a variable Style" and it was printed in New York by E. & P. Thompson, No. 55 Pine Street, in 1812.

Eighteen years prior to that date Edward Willett was buried beside Aletta, his wife of 58½ years according to the ancient stones embedded close to Grace Church in Jamaica. He had married Aletta, daughter of Katherine (Douw) and Samuel Clowes in that Parish Church May 9, 1722.

Genealogists, I found both in our Flushing Library and in the Long Island Collection in Jamaica, differ radically on the forebears of this Edward Willett. The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record being recommended by Miss Doggett as authentic, I have followed its findings.

Thomas Willett from Bristol, England, who married Sarah Cornell, was Edward's great-grandfather. His son, Colonel Thomas Willett of Flushing, was baptised November 26, 1645 at the Reformed Dutch Church in New Amsterdam. About 1668 he married Helena Stoothoff. Their son, Elbert, born about 1677, moved from Flushing to Jamaica. He married Johanna Van Varick in the Reformed Dutch Church in New York

Marion F. Overton

May 13, 1701. He was Sheriff in 1705, dying the next year. To his son, Edward, who was born in Jamaica, February 6, 1702, he willed "all my lands and tenements in the town of Flushing."

The autobiography mentions no children by name. Notwithstanding, it is in a sense dedicated to them.

"As the most Important part of my life has been attended with such circumstances as carry the strongest evidence of being under the immediate direction of a divine providence,

"I cannot without violating that justice that is due to it, avoid leaving a short account of it, for the contemplation of my married Children; in hopes it may be of some use in directing them through the different stages of married life."

One son, Elbert, born in 1723 who died August 19, 1738, is buried in the Grace Churchyard in Jamaica. Although Aletta and Edward moved to Flushing one year and a half after their marriage, they remained in the Parish of Jamaica. Edward owned a pew in the Parish Church in the days when pews

were built by the purchaser. In the church's registry are recorded baptisms of Samuel, Johanna, Edward, another Elbert, and Marinus. I believe that there were other children.

Marinus, born July 31, 1740, richly deserved the title American patriot. Soon after his birth, his parents moved to New York. In 1758 he took part in the expeditions against Fort Frontenac and Fort Ticonderoga. When the clouds of the Revolution lowered he became the leader of the Sons of Liberty. In 1775 he was a captain in the First New York Regiment. Defeated under Montgomery in Canada, he held Fort Stanwix in 1777 against St. Leger when, as 2nd in command, he was successful in a defending sortie with none of his 200 men receiving a wound.

A colonel by 1782, he continued in arms until after the signing of the peace treaty when he led the final battle at Oswego. In the State Assembly in 1784, he was later Sheriff of New York for two terms. Washington commissioned him in 1792 to make a treaty with the Creek Indians in Georgia. For one term, in



From an Early Sketch of Jamaica Village

1807, he was Mayor of New York. August 22, 1830 he died and was buried in Trinity Churchyard.

Some readers, learning of the son's heroic exploits, will call the father's story commonplace; a few may recognize an unpolished gem.

"When my Wife was about eighteen months old, and myself about four years," wrote Edward, "her Father was Clerk of Queens County, and mine Sheriff; the nature of the two offices brought on a familiar acquaintance between the two families; in so much that they lived without interruption in the greatest harmony of a well united family. In this union they took upon them to give us an infant marriage, and taught us to call each other Husband and Wife. Not long after this, God was pleased to take to himself my Father and Mother, upon which my Grandfather took the charge of me, and as soon as I was fit sent me to school, and kept me at it till I was sixteen years old, and as I was designed for a Farmer, he then took me from school and put me to the plow . . ."

At eighteen, Edward was settled on his own farm with "an old Negro, two Horses, a Plow and Harrow; &c." One day, while plowing, he "saw a young man coming across the field with a gun on his shoulder, who soon came up to me."

That the strange youth was named John Clowes made no impression on Edward, but "such a liking to each other" was aroused before they parted that "he frequently came to visit me . . . till at length he insisted upon my returning the visits."

This Edward did one Saturday evening finding a "very agreeable young Woman leaning over the door"—John's sister. He remained over night, returning the next day "after Church to my Batchelors Hall."

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My Grandfather's Diary

Robert R. Coles

WITH the exception of his personal correspondence, there is probably nothing that reveals a man's character and interests more clearly than his diary. This is especially true of those who are not in the public eye and therefore have little reason to suspect that their writings will someday be revealed to the world-at-large. The day by day entries of such men are often likely to present a more accurate picture of contemporary times than the writings of men of more prominence who may, quite unknowingly, place undue emphasis on items calculated to reveal them to future generations in the most favorable light.

I am most fortunate in having in my possession several diaries kept by my grandfather, Isaac Coles, who was born at Musketa Cove (now Glen Cove), in 1817. He was a direct descendant of Daniel Coles, one of the original settlers of Musketa Cove, in 1668. Isaac Coles lived in Glen Cove until his death, in 1897, and was a man of many talents.

As a young man he ran a general store and, while thus employed, devoted much of his spare time to the study of land surveying, which business later became his principal occupation. In addition to this he acted as a real estate agent, served for a number of years as a tax assessor for the Town of Oyster Bay, assisted the postmaster at Glen Cove, served a term in the New York State Assembly in 1862, acted as clerk for the State Senator from his district, prepared numerous wills, deeds and other legal documents for his friends and acquaintances in the community, enjoyed many hours of hunting and fishing, and, just to keep the cobwebs from gathering in his mind, managed to acquire a good knowl-



Isaac Coles, From a Tintype

edge of French, botany and astronomy. He did all this and more without the aid of electronic devices, a gasoline buggy or any of the other numerous gadgets that we consider so essential for complete living today.

Although some years are missing, I have twenty-two of his diaries covering as many years between 1861 and 1896. While the entries in these are usually very brief, they provide an interesting glimpse at the life and times of rural Long Island during the Currier and Ives era.

Among other things he kept a day by day record of the weather, including the wind, temperature, precipitation and in some instances, the barometric pressure. This antedates the official records of the U. S. Weather Bureau by some years, and it is interesting to note that one of his great-grandsons, Mr. Stanley Donaldson, Jr., a meteorologist with the Eastern Airlines, is now tabulating this

information in the hope of discovering weather trends of those years for comparison with those of today. Grandfather could hardly have anticipated that his observations would prove of interest to the weather men of an air age nearly a century in the future.

Although space does not permit more than a passing glance at a few of the items contained in these diaries, I think we can review enough of their contents to indicate what a wealth of valuable material they contain. Although many of the entries have to do with his various journeys as a land surveyor, there are interspersed among these many other items that help us to visualize the events of the time on Long Island. They have to do with the day by day interests and activities of a man who enjoyed a very wide range of interests and lived a very active life. Some are humorous and a few highlight some of the human tragedies of his career. Many have to do with his observation of natural phenomena and emphasize his deep interest in the field of science. Most of the entries are very brief, consisting of only a few words. These, however, tell far more than one might suspect from their brevity.

On January 1, 1861, he simply wrote: "Very Pleasant—Skated some." March 19th of the same year he observed a display of the northern lights and described them as follows: "A remarkable aurora all evening, extending south of the zenith." My father, Franklin A. Coles, arrived on the scene on August 24th and grandfather noted the event in the following manner: "A boy born at 2 a. m.—All well as could be expected." Another item of November 27 was certainly not intended to imply the thought it conveys. It reads: "Killed hogs today,

along with William Mudge."

The year of 1861 was of course an eventful one in the history of the country. On March fourth Lincoln was inaugurated and the Civil War was soon in full progress. Strangely enough, however, there is little mention of these momentous events in the diary. Now and then he tells of driving to the steamboat landing to get news of the war and occasionally mentions something of the progress of the troops, but generally there is little to suggest that anything unusual was going on beyond this little corner of the world. Apparently the immediate job of surveying and other interests of local nature occupied most of his attention and he let others take care of the war.

He did travel to New York frequently on business. This meant driving to Roslyn by horse and buggy and then taking the train, or making the trip from Glen Cove by steamer.

It was in 1861 that he was elected to the New York State Assembly and on January fifth, 1862, he told of leaving Glen Cove for Albany to take his oath of office. He drove by horse and buggy to Williamsburg, where he left the horse in a stable and next day proceeded to Albany by railroad. Upon returning to Glen Cove, on the eleventh, he came from New York on the steamer "Arrowsmith."

The weather was apparently unusually severe that year, both at the beginning and end. An entry in the diary for November 7 reads as follows: "Wind N. E. — About sunrise it began snowing and continued all day, with a violent wind. (This storm extended from Virginia to Maine.) Probably the worst severe storm of snow for over 50 years. The quantity of snow that fell was probably 10 to 12 inches — in some places the drifts were 4 to 5 feet high." He also mentions that two days later, November 9, it again snowed nearly all day.

On May 24th, 1868, Glen Cove celebrated the 200th anniversary of its settlement and, since that date fell on Sunday, the festivities were held the next day. Grandfather mentions the affair briefly and states that there were probably 1500 persons present. This was about the time that the railroad line was extended to Glen Cove, although many of the residents still preferred to make the journey to New York by steamer. In his diary grandfather makes frequent references to traveling to and from the city on the Seawanhaka, which some years later was destroyed by fire, with the loss of many lives.

A tragic note appears in the entries of the year 1878. This concerns the passing of Isaac Coles' mother, Amelia Hewlett Coles, who lived on the farm where he had been born, on Duck Pond Road, the main highway that ran from Glen Cove to Oyster Bay.

The entry of April 19, 1878, reads as follows: "At home, went up to see poor old mother. She is very feeble and scarcely conscious — her troubles will soon be ended." Under this is the entry: "Mother passed away quietly and gently about 8 p. m."

On April 21st he wrote: "Mother was buried today. We saw thy sacred face for the last time on Earth today. She is laid away along side of father in the grave yard at Matinecock Meeting house. Thus the mortal part will mingle with the dust — but her spirit has winged its way to the home of the blest."

Another item appearing the same year again emphasizes grandfather's interest in science. It has to do with the purchase of a telescope for use of the students at Friends College, now called Friends Academy. This school was started the year before by Gideon Frost, an enterprising Quaker who was familiarly known to all his friends as "Uncle Gideon."

Apparently grandfather pre-

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Horseshoe Crabs Are Oldtimers

HAVE you ever stopped to think how horseshoe crabs molt? They do molt for that is the only way they have of growing. Actually by the time they reach two inches in length they have molted seven times. As the crab gets older the molting slows to once a year. With each molt the linear dimension increases about 25%.

The horseshoe crab is like a grasshopper, a beetle or a praying mantis in that the skeleton (the hard part) is on the outside—animals have the skeleton on the inside. Outside - skeletoned creatures grow by getting out of the skeleton and hardening a new larger one in place of the old small one. Snakes do this way and we frequently come upon empty skins which had become too small and tight and from which the snakes have crawled to harden new and larger skins.

In a molt the horseshoe crab gets an entirely new outer skin, outer coating, or outer garment, so to speak. He will have new mouth parts, new feet, new legs, new bristles, new tail, new shell—everything brand new on the outside, the outside skeleton.

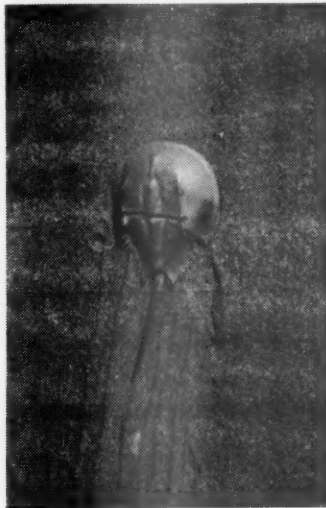
Many times we have watched insects molting. If lucky we have seen a snake shed its skin. But who has seen a horseshoe crab get out of its shell? Such has not been my experience and I am left to report the words of others more fortunate.

Those who have seen this action describe it as "the horseshoe crab seems to crawl out of its own mouth." Here is what happens. The front edges of the shell—the leading edge—splits, the upper and lower (outer and inner) plates separate, and the soft molting creature pulls itself out from the old outside skeleton which is to be discarded. The new shell and skeleton is

Julian Denton Smith

made of chitin, just like the old. It hardens quickly and the horseshoe crab is sealed in new, larger quarters. The shells vary in color from drab-green thru the browns to black.

Horseshoe crabs are oldtimers on this earth for they have been here 300 million



Gullsey View of Horseshoe Crab

years. That is longer than the birds and the animals. And thru those years the crab has survived practically without change. Another creature to inhabit our earth for about as many years is the sowbug. It, too, has survived with insignificant changes during the several million centuries.

We see horseshoe crabs rather commonly on Long Island during late spring and early summer. They come up out of the sea to lay their eggs at the edge of the water. When we contemplate the hit-or-miss fashion of this egg laying, we are astounded that there are any horseshoe crabs at all!

The first indication we have that the crab's annual invasion is on is the appearance of

quantities of males in the tidal areas of our beaches and bays during the high spring tides. The great numbers of males seem a definite guarantee that no female may approach or pass beyond the tide line without the attention of at least one male. Days later the females (larger than the males) arrive and immediately a male attaches himself to her tail. Often two or three males trail along after the same female, each grasping the tail of the creature ahead.

The females scoop out a depression in the sand an inch or so deep and into it deposit several hundred, round, greenish eggs. These are promptly fertilized by the milt of the male. All adults retire from the spot leaving the eggs completely exposed, unprotected and awaiting concealment by the action of the waves and tide in covering them with sand. A single female deposits up to 10,000 eggs during a season.

This process occurs all the way from Mexico to Maine, advancing northward as the temperature of the water rises. The greatest amount of egg laying occurs during darkness. It may be observed occasionally in broad daylight and a bit more often during the dark, foggy weather.

A month or two are needed to hatch the eggs. This depends on the warming influence of the sun at low tides and the bathing of the eggs during higher tides. Only a very small percentage of the eggs hatch because so many things happen to them. Usually salt-water fish and eels follow the females and eat the eggs as rapidly as they are deposited. Shore birds do likewise, and at later dates hunt out the sand-covered clutches to continue the feast. The larval stage, also, is at-

Continued on page 94

Alonzo Horton, Connecticut

I believe Dr. Wood was in error in the March Forum in stating that Alonzo Erastus Horton went from Southold in about 1849.

The records seem to indicate that Horton was born Oct. 24, 1813, at Union, Ct. When Horton was two years old his family moved to Madison County, N. Y. and then to Oswego County. After the Mexican War he was the founding father of Hortonville, Wisconsin, from where he went to California in 1851.

He returned to New York in 1856. In 1861 he returned to San Francisco and in 1867 became the founding father of San Diego. In 1886 Theodore D. Van Dyke wrote of Horton in a national magazine: "So Alonzo Erastus Horton for a fact had started something. But if only he had broken down, say for

a single afternoon and been publicly gay about it! If only his Connecticut instincts had allowed him, just once, to whoop up Broadway (San Diego) on a fire truck! We could talk about him then".

Van Dyke was further of the opinion that Horton was a business gambler and plunger and invariably won, but in the winning never called all to the bar to celebrate. I wish we could claim him as a native Long Islander, but that honor goes to the Nutmeg State.

Horace K. T. Sherwood
Long Beach, Calif.

John Reeve, Huntington?

Could some Forum reader supply the facts as to one Reeve, probably John, who was living in Huntington at time of his daughter's birth in 1856? Her name was Laura Higgins Reeve and she is buried in the Huntington Rural Cemetery as "Laura H. Leo." I believe he was a seaman or ship's officer some time between 1856 and 1875, possibly on the Sound. I have heard his name in connection with the steamer Miss Huntington.

Russell J. Wood
Huntington

Note: As Mr. Wood is with the

Benefit Bridge For Cenacle

The Third Annual Benefit Bridge for the Cenacle Building Fund, Lake Ronkonkoma, is to be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, New York, Saturday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock, May 14. Tickets \$1.50. Write to Box 187, Lake Ronkonkoma. Adv.

L. I. FORUM INDEX

The Queens Borough Public Library, 89-14 Parsons Blvd., Jamaica, sells a complete index of the Long Island Forum for the years 1938-1947 inclusive, at \$1 postpaid. Also for the years 1948-1952 inclusive, at 50 cents postpaid. They were compiled by Miss Marguerite V. Doggett, Librarian L. I. Collection, and may be obtained by addressing her at the Library.

armed forces in Korea, replies sent to him care of the Forum will be forwarded.

Old Mansion of Beauroux

The Forum has had an inquiry as to the location on Long Island of the above place, and would appreciate information sent us by readers who have heard of it, which we have not. Editor.

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How a Slave Won His Freedom

IT is always a pleasure to find another tale connected with our family. Now, thanks to Mr. Milton Davis, I have come across a tale which is entirely new to me.

About 1795 my great-grandfather Thomas S. Strong, who lived at Mount Misery (now Belle Terre), had his home destroyed by fire. It has always been said that he and his family were at the dinner table when someone rushed in crying that the house was ablaze. I have often wondered if it was struck by lightning, as his daughters were always afraid in a thunder storm after the event.

Accounts say that it burned so rapidly that very little could be saved. But it seems that a certain trunk was rescued by a slave who rushed into the blazing structure at great risk to his life. My great-grandfather valued the contents of the trunk so highly that, in appreciation of the slave's act, he gave him his freedom. It is probable that some of the many old documents and records that I have in my collection were in that trunk. One paper, dated in the late 1600s and signed by Andrew Miller, defines the boundaries of certain lands. Another paper bears the signature of the above Thomas S. Strong's grandfather Thomas, who was a Justice.

To return to the slave who won his freedom, this new status seems to have changed his simple nature to some extent for thereafter he gave his full names as follows: Capt. Bartlett Sanford Conklin Keeter Petty Strong Davis Norton Swezey Brown Mark Antony Buck. He even gave this name to the census taker. Although he lived to be a very old man he never tired of de-

Kate Wheeler Strong

scribing how he had saved Master Thomas Strong's trunk.

My great-grandfather seems to have had quite a number of slaves. In the Brookhaven town records of 1798 and later I find that he freed slaves known by the following names: Keder, Susan, Killis, Abel, Rose, Akerly, Unice and Barcas. He also recorded as children of his slaves Rachel, Tamar, Cealia and Ellen. The slave burying ground was on the hill behind his house, the graves marked with fieldstones bearing no names.

There was a town law pro-

hibiting the freeing of slaves unless they were in good health and between the ages of 12 and 50. The town was running no risk of having to support them. My great-grandfather Selah Strong had at least one slave run away. His name was Saul and he was to have been bequeathed his freedom, but during the 1790s Saul joined a ship's crew and sailed away. And when he learned that his own son was planning to catch him when the ship returned to New York and Saul went to the ship's owners to get his wages, Saul simply jumped to another ship and sacrificed his wages for his freedom.

Grandfather's Diary

Continued From Page 86

vailed upon Uncle Gideon to provide the funds for the building of a 4-inch portable telescope for use at the school. Grandfather was more than happy to find a suitable telescope maker and to see that the work was properly executed. There are several entries mentioning journeys to

New York to inspect the work which was being done by a man named Mr. J. Byrne. The following entry of February 25th reads: "Went to New York to see about the telescope for Gideon's School—Called on L. M. Rutherford, 175 Second Ave., he said he had examined and tested the objective and found it to be well figured and its perform-

Continued on page 93



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Our Public Schools

In colonial times, there was an attempt to establish universal education in New Netherlands through public elementary schools under the joint control and support of the Dutch Reformed Church and civil authorities.

After 1674 when England took permanent possession of the colony, this ideal of universal education suffered a great set back. Instead of public supported schools, endowed Latin grammar schools under the direction of the upper classes restricted education to a small group.

As later groups came to the new world, increased political power was given to the common people and the attitude towards education became broader and more democratic. Although temporarily delayed by the Revolution, in 1784 the Legislature created the body known as the Regents of the University of the State of New York, a corporation authorized to charter and control all institutions of secondary and higher education established in the state. In 1787 the law was amended and the Regents were "empowered to visit and inspect all the colleges and academies to be established in this state".

In 1795, the Legislature passed an act "for the purpose of establishing common schools in the state for a five year period as an experiment with support of state funds." This law was not renewed in 1800. However, upon the appeals of the Regents and various governors, especially Governor Clinton, a fund for educational purposes was established from the sale of unappropriated state lands, income from lotteries, and certain bank stock and other assets authorized by the Legislature.

Since the Regents did not concern themselves with the common schools, a committee was formed to enact a plan for the management of these schools, and the distribution of the income from the state school fund. The report of this committee was enacted as the Education Law of 1812. It divided the towns into school districts with elected trustees to take care of its schools and share of the money; and it also created the office of the superintendent of the common schools.

Gideon Hawley was appointed the first superintendent and worked out an effective system of administration and supervision. He became a victim of politics and was replaced in 1821 by a successor whose methods were so unsatisfactory that the storm of protests caused the Legislature to

Continued on next page

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abolish the office three months later.

The duties of the office were transferred to the Secretary of State who continued to serve as the superintendent of common schools until 1854 when the Legislature created an independent Department of Public Instruction, with a Superintendent in charge who was elected by joint ballots of both Houses of the Legislature.

There were now two systems of educational administration in the state! The revised law of 1864 gave both the Regents and the Superintendent some supervisory power over schools with academic departments. This system proved so unsatisfactory that in 1904 a Unification Act was passed. This Act abolished the administrative officers of both agencies, and provided for a new official called the Commissioner of Education, to perform the duties of both. The Commissioner was to be the "Executive Officer of the Board of Regents", but each agency retained its separate duties.

In 1910, and in subsequent revisions of the Education Law, the University of the State of New York was recognized as the State Education Department, and since then, the Regents have been declared as the head of the Department, and in charge of all levels and types of education. The Regents became trustees of the State Museum back in 1845. In 1915 the Division of Archives and History was added. In 1927 the Division of Motion Pictures was added. At various dates the Regents were placed in charge of certain Scientific and Historic Institutions, and special schools, such as Schools for the Deaf, Schools for the Blind, Schools for the Physically Handicapped, etc.

The most recent revision of the Education Law was made in 1952, and is so complex that it requires three volumes of McKinney's Consolidated Laws of New York to record it.

Margaret Herrmann
Islip

Note: Mrs. Herrmann, a member of the faculty of the Islip High School, prepared the foregoing at the request of the editor.

Pamphlets Invaluable

May I say that the Forum's pamphlets on The Long Island Indian, Long Island Whalers, and The Thirteen Tribes, have been of invaluable aid in supplying information about Long Island history to our ever-growing school classes.

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The Geology of Long Island

Under the above title a pamphlet is to be published shortly by the Long Island Forum and The Little Museum of Glen Cove. It is by Robert R. Coles, Contributing Editor of the Forum, head of The Little Museum and former head of The Hayden Planetarium in New York City. It will be a limited edition of only 500 numbered copies and will sell at \$1. Orders may be sent either to the Forum, Amityville, or The Little Museum, Glen Cove.

As readers of the Forum know, Mr. Coles writes in a very clear, concise way, with a minimum use of scientific and technical terms, thus making his work suitable for the average reader, as well as for classroom use.

Mr. Coles' knowledge of the island's geology is based on long and thorough study, as well as personal observation in the field. He has taught the subject and has spoken before numerous audiences on this subject as well as on astronomy, in which field he has spent many years professionally.

Dutch Broadway

In a recent issue you asked where "Dutch Broadway" was. Up until recent times, that is within the last several years, it ran from Elmout road to Corona avenue in North Valley Stream. It has now been extended on both ends and runs from Franklin avenue on the east to Queens County line and the later extension is called New Dutch Broadway.

Willard J. Davies, M.D.
Rockville Centre

Smith House, Centre Island

The picture of the Thomas Smith house in the March issue was one I have always wanted. Raymond Smith, a relative of mine who lived in Oyster Bay, promised me one but passed on before he could deliver. Just another example of Forum coverage.

Charles W. Smith
Glenside, Pa.

Millions of Codfish

Forum fishermen will probably be interested to know that in February of 1895 ten million young tomcods were planted in Peconic Bay at New Suffolk. They had come from the State Fish Hatchery at Cold Spring Harbor in response to an application made by W. H. Grant, proprietor of the Grant House.

Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood
Senior Contributing Editor

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Grandfather's Diary

Continued from page 89

ance good—in fact first rate—showing all objects that an objective of that size is capable of doing.”

On February 28 grandfather brought the completed instrument from New York to Glen Cove. He did not take it to the school, however, until the fourteenth of May, some two and a half months later. Although not mentioned in his diary, I am convinced that the telescope did not remain idle all that time.

An interesting sidelight on grandfather's interest in astronomy came to my attention many years after his death, when I happened to have luncheon one day in New York with Dr. Henry Norris Russell, then head of the astronomy department at Princeton University, and a man who is recognized as one of the greatest astronomers this country

has ever produced. During our conversation Dr. Russell asked if, by any chance, I was related to a gentleman named Isaac Coles from Glen Cove, who, when he was a boy, had shown him a telescope and talked to him about the wonders of the heavens. Dr. Russell told me that that incident of his childhood had been one of the most important factors that helped to inspire his interest in astronomy, in which field he later became such an authority. It was most gratifying to me to learn that grandfather, through his great love of the stars had helped start this man down the royal road to fame as an expert in his chosen field of astronomy.

Romance and Marriage

Continued from page 84

Alternate visits continuing, Edward being “led by a happy impulse to a strict observation of the conduct of this

agreeable young woman in her Fathers family . . . I concluded that this must be the very person providence had allotted” and addressed “her in terms of an unexperienced lover.”

Regardless of Aletta “declaring her attachment to a single life” and playing “a loose game with me for near a year,” at last “our panting hearts mutually engaged each other.”

Mr. Clowes being away at the time, “I first applied myself to her mother for her consent, which was no sooner asked than granted; upon which the old Gentlewoman gave me the history of our infant marriage, with her observations how wonderfully providence had brought us together; and upon the return of the old Gentleman all matters being settled . . . soon brought on the happy nuptial

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day . . . my Wife not quite seventeen years old and myself not quite twenty.

"Being now agreeable to laws of God and man, happily joined together . . . God was pleased to bless us with a spirit leading to a religious life; and though we were babes in the school of Christ, we became members of the Church of England soon after our marriage, and invariably walked heart and hand together to the house of God near fifty-eight years and a half without once turning our backs on the Lord's table from any cause that ever occurred.

"From this happy beginning we had a comfortable hope of being fixed upon the Rock of ages; from which the next thing to be considered was how to order the things of time, and the things of Eternity, so that they should not interfere with each other . . .

"If at any time a disjointed clashing of opinion happened between us, we carefully avoided adding fuel to increase a flame, but with the greatest care let it die in its own embers; from which practice we were happily preserved from those unhappy broils that too often happen in a married life."

The "Matrimonial Life of Edward Willett" concludes

with "My Wives Epitaph" and "My Epitaph", but I have chosen for my conclusion his perfect tribute to his wife.

Alone after Aletta's death, October 3, 1780, and looking back on their 58½ years together he wrote of her: "one of the best of women, and the best of wives; no comfort could a man receive from a woman, but I had it from her; and as we met in love, we parted in love."

Horseshoe Crabs

Continued from Page 87

tractive to fish and birds. It is said that some people consider the eggs a great delicacy.

The eggs of the horseshoe crab possess remarkable vitality. One cluster was forgotten in a laboratory jar and came to no one's attention almost a year later, when they were given ordinary, usual living conditions. The eggs responded normally and hatched in due time. For shipment to England the eggs are packed in seaweed. No matter how fast or slow the transporta-

tion, they always arrive in a healthy condition.

As soon as hatched the young horseshoe crabs take to the water and feed on minute marine organisms. They molt several times during the first summer and by the end

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of the first year are about one inch in length. Altho horseshoe crabs breathe thru gills, the adults are capable of existing slightly more than 24 hours out of water.

Small marine worms are a staple item of diet for the larger crabs. The adults enjoy clams, especially the commercially important soft clam, and sometimes clean out entire beds. From observation and experiment at Newburyport, Mass., it seems horseshoe crabs are able to locate clams at least two or three feet away.

Once beyond the egg and larva the horseshoe crab apparently has no natural enemies with the exception of two fish—the devil ray and the swordfish. These eat the crab regularly and without being pressed for food. Otherwise the shell, acting like a plate of armor, gives complete protection to the creature within. Even barnacles do not attach themselves to the living shell. This must be due to the constant activity of the crab in digging, burrowing and working the sand on the ocean bottom.

The name "crab" attached to this creature is, of course, a mistake for the individual is more closely related to the spiders than to the crabs. The mistake parallels that of jellyfish which is no fish at all.

The eyes of the horseshoe crab are compound, like those of an insect rather than the single organ of the animals. The tail, which does not appear until the first molt, is interesting in that it seems to have one single use—to gain leverage to turn the crab over from its back to an upright position. The tail is not used aggressively.

I have not seen this, but I learn on excellent authority that horseshoe crabs swim on their backs, using the feet and gills as propelling forces. It is said the swimming is graceful and in no wise suggestive of the awkward, clumsy gait on foot. If this swimming on the back is true, then the horseshoe crab would surely need

his tail to right himself when beached, stranded or fouled.

Horseshoe crabs are not believed to frequent water over 50 feet in depth. I think they stay off shore of Long Island over winter as this December (1954) I have come upon two on the beach. Both crabs had been overturned and partially eaten by gulls.

Other common names for the horseshoe crab are sword-tail and pan crab. The Latin name is *Limulus*. The North American Indian ate this crab and used the pointed tail to tip his fish spears. In Delaware Bay the crab is caught in arrangements of nets, similar to our fish pounds, and are ground up for fertilizer. Egg-laden females, broken or hacked apart, bait lobster and eel pots. The discarded or shed shells make handy utensils for bailing out boats.

Because so very little is known concerning the abundance and the migratory habits of the horseshoe crab the Clam Investigations service at Newburyport, Mass., is tagging the crab. In the last three summers over 1700 have been tagged. If you should find one of the tagged crabs, carefully read the tag and please report your find in the manner requested. Such cooperation on your part will be of tremendous value to the service.

One of the great aims of everything that lives is to survive. How extremely well the horseshoe crab has done just that! Millions of years ago

Europe was the center of the horseshoe crab population. When the continent rose up out of the sea, the crabs spread eastward and westward. Now there are two regions of horseshoe crab population—the east coast of Asia from India to Japan, and the east coast of North America from Yucatan to Maine.

For one creature to successfully survive on this earth for at least 300 million years with virtually no change in its make-up seems beyond comprehension. Certainly that creature must fit very definitely into the scheme of things—yet the part played by the horseshoe crab does not suggest importance at any point. I wonder what balance of Nature would be upset if suddenly the horseshoe crab ceased to exist!

Oyster Bay's Slaves

Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs of Bethpage surprised me and I feel certain many other Forum readers by telling the story (in February Forum) of "Black Tom, Oyster Bay Slave." The case of this Negro not only shows the lack of racial prejudice among early Long Islanders, but reflects credit on Black Tom's race many generations before freedom was the usual thing.

It is possible that the prevalence of the Friends' Society and a broad acceptance of its doctrines by non-Quakers had something to do with this laudable condition.

Dr. Stanley Arata
Elmont

Both the wife and I enjoy the Forum even as much as Dad did. He started the Forum habit and we would never drop it. Good as ever. J. Robert Bailey Jr., Patchogue.

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By invitation this Traphagen collection has been exhibited at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and various pieces have likewise been shown in other major museums. The photograph shown here was made when the late Michelle Murphy of the Brooklyn Museum viewed the Traphagen jewelry in anticipation of an exhibit, planned by her but decreed by fate never to materialize.

It is the hope recently expressed by Ethel Traphagen, the school's director, that these valuable assets to American fashion may one day have wider scope. As to this future, Miss Traphagen is searching now for the correct solution to the problem of perpetuating these museum collections, which besides jewelry include over 1000 period costumes, thousands of dolls, fans, buttons and all types of accessories, the extremely valuable art reference library and her celebrated school

as an integral whole which can continue for the benefit and inspiration of future generations for which these were assembled by her and her husband, W. R. Leigh.

Meanwhile, there are always interesting displays of student work from sketches to finished garments, geographic and period costumes, art and art objects on view at Traphagen and visitors are welcome to drop in and see them in the school's galleries at 1680 Broadway (52d St.), New York.



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Major Thomas Wickes, Patriot

H. P. Horton

FROM a pamphlet written some years ago by Norman Adams Hanan for the Major Thomas Wickes Chapter of the N. S. D. A. R., we are using the following facts with the permission of the author. The pamphlet, entitled "Major Thomas Wickes and the Little Neck Farm," tells of the interesting life of this heroic Patriot of the Revolutionary era. He was born in Huntington, the only son of Eliphalet and Jemima Scudder Wickes, August 10, 1744, and was descended from Captain Thomas Wickes (or Weekes), one of Huntington's patentees in 1653 and who three years later participated in the town's "second purchase" from the Matinecocs, covering a tract extending from Northport harbor to the Nissequog river.

Major Thomas Wickes in 1762 married Sarah Brush who died the following year, and in 1767 married Abigaile Van Wyck, daughter of Barant Van Wyck of Oyster Bay. Thomas, who served as town surveyor and as county commissioner of highways, was among the earliest Long Islanders to join the movement against British oppression which led to the Revolution. In 1775 he was elected chairman of his town's Committee of Safety and helped organize a regiment of Colonial Volunteers. Following the first open fighting in and around Boston, he became chairman of Huntington's War Committee and in that capacity reported to General Washington that thirteen British foraging ships had been sighted off Eaton's Neck.

Several months before the battle of Long Island in August, 1776, he brought about the conviction of one Israel Young and two confederates for counterfeiting Continental currency. He organized the town's Minute Men and captained the Fifth Company in Colonel Jacob Smith's regi-

ment, under General Nathaniel Woodhull.

Following the battle of Long Island and the occupation of Huntington and other island communities by British troops, Thomas refused to sign Governor William Tryon's oath of allegiance to the King. Instead, under cover of darkness he and Abigail, with their five children, left Huntington by boat for Norwalk, Ct., where three of the children shortly thereafter died of disease. A fourth died later but the oldest son, Eliphalet, survived to become a courier for the American forces, and later a successful lawyer.

During the war, Thomas made frequent trips to Long Island as a spy and to raise funds for the American cause to which he also made a large personal loan. It was while stationed at Fairfield, Ct., that he received his commission as Major. He also served as Department Commander General of Purchases in the Quartermaster Corps and was a member of the New York State Assembly from 1777 to 1783. Meanwhile his large Huntington farm was appropriated by his Tory brother-

in-law, Captain Thomas Van Wyck who there billeted his company of the King's Militia.

In 1783, however, at the close of the war Wickes retrieved his badly damaged property and was appointed Suffolk's high sheriff by Governor Clinton. Some years later he was elected to serve as such again from 1791 to 1795, the year of his retirement. Resigning as a trustee of the Huntington Presbyterian Church which he had helped restore after the war, he purchased a large farm in the town of Flushing, on Little Neck, also known at various times as Cornbury, Little Madnan's Neck, and Hicks' Point.

It was to this large farm, which the Major acquired January 11, 1796, that he gave most of his time thereafter until 1813 when he disposed of the property to Wyant Van Zandt for \$25,000. In 1835 it was purchased by George Douglas for which family, many years later, Douglaston and Douglas Manor were named.

As for the Wickes farmhouse, now standing at 126 West Drive, in Douglaston, it is still in excellent shape despite its more than 200 years. It is believed to have been built by a member of the

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Hicks family, original patentees of the property in 1666. After disposing of the farm, Major Thomas Wickes located at Jamaica where he died November 20, 1819, and where, too, he was buried.

Mattituck School of 1790

Among some old family account books some years ago we found the original subscription list, dated May 10, 1790, for a new school in the Mattituck school district which then, it seems, extended from near the present railroad crossing on Sound avenue to beyond the Manor Lane in Northville. The building was erected on the south side of the highway, a little to the west of the old Egypt school which came later. The land was donated by James Hallock (1762-1852).

"We the subscribers," reads the subscription list, "do agree to Build A School house upon the North East Corner Of James Hallock Land, length Eighteen Foot Breadth Fourteen foot". (We have clarified the spelling). The signers all of whom contributed money, materials or labor, were: Jacob Aldrich, Zacharias Hallock, Caleb Hallock, Benjamin Goldsmith Jr., Asa Corwin, Samuel Tuthill Jr., Ezra Hallock, James Hallock, Selah Corwin, William Simons and James Reeve.

As an interesting sequel to the above subscription list, we have also seen the original school register of this same district for 1827. The school had probably been enlarged by then as fifty-three pupils attended that year. The list contains numerous Hallocks, namely: Isaiah, Charity, Wells, Caleb, Evander, Edwin, Joel B., Laurence, Jared, Patience, Jacob, Mary,

Helen, Samuel, Fanny and Zachariah 3rd.

There were also quite a few Aldrich children, as follows: Sophronia, Ann M., Harry, Elisha, Catharine, Abagil, Deborah, and Gilson. Those named Reeve were Franklin, Joanna, Hannah, Julia Ann, Betsey and Sally. The Simons family was represented by Clarinda, William S., Selden, Henry and Francis, and the Downs family by Daniel and Irad.

There were Samuel, Thomas, Daniel and Betsey Hudson; also David and William T. Horton, and Eli W., Youngs and George Howell. Besides all these were Sylvester Randall, Elizabeth Cooper, Reeve Williamson, George Corwin, James Brown and Charles Cox.

Listed also were those who brought wood for the school stove as follows: John, Bethuel, David and Benjamin Hallock, Daniel Downs, Gershom Aldrich, Edmund Reeve, Jonathan Howell and Daniel Hudson. The names of all the pupils appear in a little homemade book which was found in the How-

ell homestead, giving reason to think that the teacher, whose name is not mentioned, may have been a Howell.

Bessie L. Hallock
Riverhead

Note: The foregoing information was contained in a letter sent the Forum some years ago by Miss Hallock.

The Islip Clocks

A story in an Islip paper by the town historian purporting to tell about the Clock family there jumps from the early 1700's to the late 1800's. Weren't there any important Clocks in Islip town in the interim? M. W. D. Note: Yes, Seth R. Clock was Bay Shore's first postmaster. Selah T. Clock was a very prominent oyster planter and shipper.

George R. Van Allen, Malverne historian, did a good job with his story *The Rise of Malverne*, in March number. (Mrs.) Grace I. Lefferts, Brooklyn.

Southampton Historical Museum

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The Cenacle, Lake Ronkonkoma

The Cenacle at Lake Ronkonkoma, a retreat for women, girls and children irrespective of religious faith, was made possible about 50 years ago, when Miss Maude Adams gave her large estate "Sandy Garth," for the purpose.

It is one of a number of Catholic convents in this country which stem from the mother Cenacle founded shortly after 1800 in southern France. The Lake Ronkonkoma Cenacle will hold its third annual bridge party for the Cenacle Building Fund at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City on Saturday, May 14, at 2:00 p.m. Tickets at \$1.50 may be obtained by writing to Box 187, Lake Ronkonkoma.

Southampton Historic Tour

Forum readers will undoubtedly be interested in a series of historic tours which will be put on by the Southampton Historical Museum during the coming summer months. On Saturday, June 25, historic homes and gardens of the town, including North Sea, Water Mill and other communities, will be open to groups sponsored by a committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Lloyd Dewey, Box 22, Hampton Bays. Tickets \$2.50.

Also during June, at the Museum on Meeting House lane, near Main street, Southampton, an exhibit lasting several weeks, from 10:30 to 4:30 daily, will feature a display of the Corning Glass Co.'s early American glass, which recently completed a two years' tour of European cities.

July 14 and 15 a Hobby Show will be staged in the High School auditorium for the benefit of the Old Country Store at the Museum, and during August there will be a special Indian exhibit.

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